mouldings, and all other details are opposed to it. The earlier examples, windows of two or more lights, with foliated circles in the head, are contemporaneous with lancet windows, and are continually found together in the same building. Nothing is more common than to find the side windows of a chancel lancet shaped, and the end windows of three lights with foliated circles in the head, evidently built at the same time. Many of these foliated circles are earlier than Mr. Sharpe's first date. Mr. Sharpe's three first figures, Nos. 1, 2, 3, as given in p. 356 of THE BUILDER, as examples of three distinct *periods*, are, in fact, often contemporaneous. On the other hand, the later division of those windows, which have not only foliated circles in the head, but other tracery of geometrical patterns, are continually found contemporaneously with flowing tracery; and there is the same difference between doorways and other details accompanying these two divisions, as between those which accompany lancet windows on the one hand, and flowing tracery on the other.

6. *Curvilinear Period*, 1315-1360.—Examples of flowing tracery occur both before and after these dates, as in Bray Church, Berkshire, built in 1293; the Friary at Reading, in 1306; the Lady Chapel at St. Alban's, in 1308; and in Wymington Church, Bedfordshire, built between 1270 and 1290. They are, therefore, contemporaneous, both with geometrical, and occasionally also with perpendicular, tracery.

7. *Rectilinear Period*, 1360-1550.—This is merely a change of name without any object, and the dates are not well chosen. The change of style did not begin quite so early, though occasional instances may be found. On the other hand, good Gothic work did not continue so late as 1550 as a general style, although occasional instances may be found for a century after that date.

Another objection to Mr. Sharpe's periods is that they cannot be applied to foreign countries. In some districts "the lancet period" is wanting altogether; in others "the geometrical period" extends through nearly the whole of the 13th and 14th centuries. And the Flamboyant styles are as much Curvilinear as any style can be, yet they extend through the whole of the 15th and 16th centuries. Mr. Sharpe's attempt is well intended, but he has not attended sufficiently to the ascertained dates of various buildings, and neither he nor any one else will succeed in upsetting the received division of styles, which is grounded on fact, and has been subjected to the test of the careful examination of many accurate observers for a long term of years. F. S. A.

METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY.

THE general outcry against the Government project for consolidating, or, in other words, confirming and legalising the old insanitary system of supply from the Thames, &c., by the metropolitan water companies, appears to have turned the public attention back upon the more hopeful, or at least more reformative schemes of others, and especially of the Board of Health, which body certainly has not been leavened with that spirit of pithless futility which appears designedly and systematically to pursue a neutral course that pleases none but a pitiful minority of negatives, and then mistakes for a just medium measures which merely excite dissatisfaction and disgust on all hands, and are decided on simply, it would seem, because they are sure to meet with such a reception.

The Board of Health reports and documents relating to this vital and important subject, have been published by order of the House of Commons. Amongst these documents, recently handed us, are the Hon. William Napier's report and papers of suggestions on the proposed gathering grounds for the supply of the metropolis from the soft-water springs of the Surrey sands (already noticed in our columns), and the recently-issued copies of report by Mr. Rammell, an inspector of the Board of Health, and of reports subsequent to Mr. Napier's, and other information on these soft-water springs, together with estimates, surveys, minutes, and correspondence with the General Board of Health thereon, or in relation to the combination of the new sources with other works. The heads of the Bill for constituting commissioners for the Metropolitan Water Supply, brought into the Commons by Mr. F. Mowatt, Sir Benjamin Hall, and Mr. C. Lushington, with a synopsis of the same, have also been printed.

It appears from the latest printed documents of the Central Board of Health proceedings just referred to, that subsequent investigations have in the main confirmed, and, indeed, more than confirmed, the truth of Mr. Napier's report, that abundance of excellent soft water might be gathered, at moderate cost, from the Surrey springs. The supply is even more abundant, and the cost would be even more moderate than was at first supposed. "The present proximate estimate for collecting and bringing to London the proposed soft water supplies," it is said, "may be taken at 900,000*l*." The Board, as may be remembered, proposed to unite the sewerage with the water supply in one consolidated system, and "the estimate made by their inspectors of the conjoint expense of new main drainage works, main intercepting lines of sewers for upper districts, discharge lines of sewer for lower districts, connecting lines of sewer, and pipes to and from engines, buildings, &c., is 710,000*l*."

The heads of the Bill which the Board would propose are, "That the powers vested in the present Metropolitan Sewers' Commission be executed by a special commission for carrying out the improvements required, but that the numbers of commissioners be reduced to , of whom shall be paid salaries not exceeding *l*. and be removable at pleasure, and that the present powers of the commissioners for obtaining water for cleansing, for street-washing, and other purposes, be continued, and their powers further extended, to enable them to distribute water for domestic use."

The cost at which the Board state it to be practicable to afford new and complete supplies is, on a maximum estimate, threepence a week each house throughout the metropolis,—that is, for a continuous supply; but this includes large supplies for street cleansing, &c., and the exclusive expense of complete supplies for domestic use, *de novo*, they state at two pence a week each house.*

While engaged, single-handed, as "the monopolist of incendiary gas intelligence,"—that is, in exciting and leading the gas movement, which has done and is doing so much good to the public, and yielding so much profit to the gas companies, we repeatedly stated our desire in the first place to secure the success of that movement, so that thence a hopeful and instructive starting point might be gained from which reformative measures of a like or, if then practicable, of an amended nature, as regards water supply, might take their initiative. Now it is highly gratifying to observe the prominent position which the central Board of Health give to this very line of policy in their minute of date 14th January, 1851. In this minute the Board, while reflecting on the fact that almost every existing water company in the metropolis, except the New River Company, was introduced to the public upon a promise of reductions of charge, based on competition and the opportunities of free choice from more than one supply, go on to say:—

"But of late an example has been presented of reductions of charge for gas by means of the incursion of new capital into the field of supply, which has created a considerable impression throughout the metropolis; and it is scarcely to be expected that the same thing will not occur in respect to water, if the opportunity is left open by the continuance of the existing state of things.

The various gas companies introduced on the ground of competition, had, one after another, districts divided amongst them, by the consent of the rest. Within each district they had as complete a monopoly as that which the water companies now have. Their manufacture of gas was careless, and the price they charged for it was from 7s. to 12s. per 1,000 cubic feet. It may be manufactured in large quantities at 2s. 6d. per 1,000 cubic feet. A new company canvassed the shopkeepers and the larger consumers of gas, and obtained from them engagements that they would take supplies of gas from the new company if it were supplied at the reduced price of 4s. per 1,000 cubic feet of gas promised by them. Upon these engagements new capital was raised, and the works of the new company introduced. One of the old companies has been compelled to reduce its rates to 4s. per 1,000 cubic feet, a sum from one-half to one-third the former prices. Another new company has compelled a reduction of the price from 7s. to 5s. per 1,000 cubic feet.

On reviewing this proceeding, however, it may be averred that a course like that now proposed for the improvement of the water supplies, would (had it been *practicable*, as the course *adopted* alone was, under the circumstances) have been far more conducive to the public interests than the one by which the reduction of the price of gas has been effected, leaving, as it does, within the metropolis, a number of defective and unnecessary establishments, which are themselves frequently a serious nuisance [as we ourselves often hopelessly pointed out.]

In the case of the competing gas companies, applications were made from both parties for the mediation of the Board on behalf of the public, but the Board [themselves even] were compelled to decline all interference; for although there could have been *no doubt* that much public good might have been effected, and unnecessary waste and private loss averted by a proper mediation and consolidation of works, yet, from the urgent duties pressing upon the Board, with very limited means at their disposal, it was considered that they were incompetent to take any part in the matter.

The occupier of a first-class house, with stables, who now pays 11*l*. per annum for a supply of water to his house and stables, may, as has been done with gas, be assured of a constant, instead of an Intermittent supply, by a new company, for 3*l*. or 4*l*. per annum; while the use of cisterns, which involve dilapidations and plumbers' bills, often equal to the water-rents, may be dispensed with. The occupiers of lower class houses may be promised reductions in like proportion, and it is clear that the premise might be made good to them in respect to water, as it has been in respect to gas.

It does not appear to be necessary, however, that the question of the value of the existing works should be entered into. That question may fairly be postponed for determination by arbitration. It is only adverted to here to elucidate the fallacy of any assumption of the continuation of a stable property in the water companies, if there be no interference with them on behalf of the public. On the contrary, the case of the gas companies shows that if there be no interference and consolidation they are all exposed to extreme jeopardy."

The commission or trusteeship in which the Board propose, in this minute, to vest the control of water supply and sewerage, is de-

* The following statement of the cost of water in thirty-two towns, &c., visited by Mr. W. Lee, superintending inspector to the Board, is interesting, and may be useful.

PLACE.	Population.	Number of Houses.	Present Cost of Water per Week. 1st Class.	2nd Class.	Cottages.
Market Harborough	2,667	474	3½	3½	3½
Great Bowden	1,329	295	3½	3½	3½
Little Bowden	598	92	3½	3½	3½
Ashby-de-la-Zouch	4,175	835	5½	5½	5½
East Retford	2,993	695	2½	2½	2½
West Retford	643	127	2½	2½	2½
Clarborough	2,302	363	2½	2½	2½
Ordsall	1,186	193	2½	2½	2½
Bacup	6,000	1,500	10½	6½	3½
Swaffham	3,414	700	19	19	19
Loughborough	11,000	2,410	3	3	3
Knighton	1,450	261	3½	5½	9½
Mileham	532	122	4½	4½	4½
Godmanchester	2,152	472	5½	5½	5½
Epsom	5,200	874	6½	3½	3½
Holbeach	3,250	650	6½	2½	2½
Newcastle-under-Lyme	10,432	1,900	9	5	4
Burslem	17,503	3,539	9	5	4
Nantwich	6,000	1,084	7½	3½	3½
Ely	7,803	1,552	7½	3	3½
Litton	864	154	7	7	7
Diss	3,470	700	8	3½	3
Reading	22,716	4,200	12	6	2½
Gainsborough	6,154	1,715	7	3½	2½
Yarmouth	28,019	6,050	6½	4	3½
Gorwood	1,305	266	4	4	4
Alfreton	2,000	350	7	6	4½
March	6,298	1,307	6	4	3½
Selby	8,190	1,130	7½	3½	2
Norwich	62,344	16,363	12½	4½	2½
Worksop	4,025	854	8	3	3
Wisbech	8,850	1,955	6½	6	6
Total	241,913	52,675	...	...	...

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